

Charles Taylor faces 17 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of international humanitarian law. Charles Taylor's time is up. We are asking that you make a concerted effort to see that he is brought before the Special Court.

The despotic rule of Charles Taylor in Sierra Leone, while president of Liberia, represents his tyrannical influence in fueling Sierra Leone's ten-year civil war. He is accused of providing financial support, military training, and other support and encouragement to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to destabilize Sierra Leone in order to gain access to her diamond wealth.

Charles Taylor also organized and ordered widespread and systematic attacks to terrorize the civilian population in Sierra Leone. Disturbing examples include abductions, sexual slavery of women, and children, large scale physical violence and unlawful killings, notably hacking off of limbs, facial and bodily mutilations, body carvings, gang rapes, and hacking and burning to death those whom he felt did not sufficiently support the RUF.

As you know, the three-year mandate of the Special Court for Sierra Leone expires June 30, 2005. Since its inception, the Special Court has been collecting and analyzing evidence against Charles Taylor. Just last week, the Special Court courthouse officially opened its doors.

Time is of the essence. Charles Taylor needs to be brought to justice before the three-year mandate expires. It is intolerable that Charles Taylor is living with impunity in the lap of luxury in Nigeria, with just about anything he needs at his disposal, including a cell phone. There is growing evidence that Charles Taylor continues to meddle in the political affairs of Liberia. He has expressed a desire to return to Liberia. We must not be blind to the fact that he has not lost his thirst for the political power he once had before his exile.

We have no doubt that you find Charles Taylor's brutal cycle of violence as abhorrent as we do. We urge you to act swiftly to ensure that Charles Taylor is held accountable for his actions. There should be no safe harbor for tyrants like Charles Taylor. We must act now.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf; Edward R. Royce; Joe Baca; Howard L. Berman; Robert A. Brady; John A. Culberson; Peter A. DeFazio; Jim DeMint; Vernon J. Ehlers; Lane Evans; Sam Farr; Trent Franks; Virgil H. Goode, Jr.; Michael M. Honda.

Patrick J. Kennedy; James R. Langevin; James P. McGovern; Bobby L. Rush; John Shimkus; Christopher H. Smith; Vic Snyder; Thomas G. Tancredo; Ellen O. Tauscher; Patrick J. Tiberi; James T. Walsh; Jerry Weller; Curt Weldon; Albert R. Wynn.

TRIBUTE TO VELMA M. WEBBER BOUCHARD ON HER INDUCTION INTO THE UPPER PENINSULA LABOR HALL OF FAME

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the achievements of Velma M. Webber Bouchard, who will be honored for her service to the cause of American working men and women with induction into the Upper Peninsula Labor Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Marquette, Michigan on April 17th.

Velma, who grew up in Luce County, began her outstanding service to workers of the U.P. and the Democratic Party in 1975. That was the year when she started her job at the Newberry Board of Water and Light and joined Local 2530, Council 55 (now Council 25) of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

Her service in AFSCME includes a long list of leadership positions. She served as Local President for two years; Secretary-Treasurer for four years; Recording Secretary for three years; Delegate to the Eastern U.P. Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO for seven years and Vice-Chair of the U.P. AFSCME Political Action Committee.

Velma also traveled extensively through the region teaching Labor History and representation skills to AFSCME members. She served her local union in AFSCME Council level governance functions, periodically serving as a delegate from her local to the Council 55, 11 and 25 Annual Conventions, as well as being a delegate to the Michigan State AFL-CIO Conventions.

As a trade union leader, Velma spent time working to make her union even more effective by serving on the U.P. AFSCME Community Services Committee and by serving on the Union Women/Minorities Leadership Training Program Board during the 1980s.

Beyond her union, Velma's involvement in political activities is also a reflection of her nonstop efforts to protect and represent Michigan workers. Since 1988, she has served as Chair of the Luce County Democratic Party and served as its Vice-Chair before then. Velma has also been an Officer-At-Large of the Michigan Democratic Party for four years; was elected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1992; and has served as an alternate delegate to the Michigan Democratic State Central Committee. During the Blanchard Administration, Governor Blanchard called upon Velma to take several appointments, including the Controlled Substance Advisory Committee and the International Trade Board.

Despite all of the time devoted to organized labor and politics, Velma still found time for civic duty. She is a lifetime member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 74, serving as its President and District President. She has served as a member of the Michigan Selective Service Board No. 17 since 1985.

Velma retired from the Newberry Board of Water and Light in 1993 after 18 years. We cannot thank her enough for her endless energy and dedication fighting for the rights of Michigan workers.

I also want to acknowledge Joe King, Velma's good friend of many years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my House colleagues to join me in acknowledging Velma Webber Bouchard's lifetime of contributions to organized labor and her community, and in celebrating the accomplishments that have earned her the distinction of becoming an honored member of the Upper Peninsula Labor Hall of Fame.

THANKING JAMES JOYCE OF CHICAGO

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank outgoing Chicago Fire Commissioner James Joyce for his 39 years of noble service to the department and to wish him well in his retirement.

Commissioner Joyce enjoyed a remarkable rise through the ranks of the Chicago Fire Department before being appointed to the top post by Mayor Richard M. Daley in 1999. During his more than four years as commissioner, Commissioner Joyce spearheaded important changes to the department, including building new firehouses, replacing and updating firehouse equipment, and improving coordination with suburban fire departments. His tenure as Commissioner was also noteworthy for the respect he garnered from rank and file firefighters throughout the department.

His steady leadership also was apparent after the Sept. 11 attacks, when Commissioner Joyce committed the department to aiding disaster prevention efforts and oversaw changes in policies and procedures to protect the people of Chicago.

Commissioner Joyce was born in 1942 and was educated at Chicago State University. He received his master's degree in public administration from Governor's State University.

Commissioner Joyce began his career within the Chicago Fire Department as a firefighter assigned to Truck 4 in Chinatown in 1965. After serving as engineer, lieutenant and captain he was promoted to battalion chief in 1979. Later his administrative posts included District Chief and Deputy Fire Commissioner.

The Joyce family's commitment to firefighting and to protecting the lives of Chicago's citizens began long before the Commissioner joined the force. Commissioner Joyce is a third-generation Chicago firefighter, whose maternal grandfather, father and brother all served. His grandfather gave the ultimate sacrifice, dying as a result of battling a 1934 blaze at the old Chicago Stockyards.

Commissioner Joyce and his wife Janet reside in St. John Fisher Parish on Chicago's South Side and are the parents of four children. I wish Commissioner Joyce the best as he begins his well-deserved retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I join in all of Chicago in thanking James Joyce for his long record of achievement in serving our city. His dedication and passion will be missed.

TRIBUTE TO TOM CATLETT

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, our county courts are a key component of the example America sets for the rest of the world; but it is only as admirable as the men and women who serve within it. I am honored to rise today to pay tribute to a proud servant of the Monroe County Court, Tom Catlett, for the positive mark he has left on Monroe County and the courthouse he has dedicated his life to serving.